



Weekly GLA Family Newsletter

August 26, 2025

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Mr. Byars - Paraeducator for Kindergarten

Tell us one of your favorite memories from your time at GLA.

My first day at GLA and seeing all of the beautiful, smiling faces of our students.

What made you want to become a teacher (or what made you want to work in a school)?

To have an impact on our youth and help them understand the value they have.

What keeps you coming back to GLA every day?

The welcoming staff, students, and the embodiment of the important values that everyone in this community holds.

Where are you originally from? (If Chicago, tell us what neighborhood!) What do you love about that place?

Baltimore, MD. I love Old Bay seasoning with crabs.

What's your favorite thing to do in Chicago?

Sit by the fountain with my dog in Wicker Park.

We all know teaching can be a stressful job! What's your favorite way to unwind?

I love playing video games and watching movies.

What are your hidden or surprising talents?

I'm good at soccer.

What's your dream vacation?

Japan (I went this past summer)

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Families,

Congratulations on getting through week 1! Returning from summer vacation and getting back into the routine of school is never an easy transition. However, as a community, we are working together to ensure that our students are prepared to take on the school year.

Last Friday, we hosted our second annual “Anchors Up!” start of year event. Our students and staff spent the day building community with each other, working together as teams, and learning what it means to “Be GREAT” at GLA all while having a ton of fun.

Our Kindergarten through 2nd graders were at GLA. They played teambuilding games, worked on learning the GLA Creed, and practiced their homeroom cheer. Our 3rd and 4th graders went to ClimbZone where they did their own teambuilding, practiced the school creed, and faced their fears on a high ropes course. Our 5th through 8th graders traveled to Intentional Sports on the west side. There students competed in a series of cooperative competitions with their homeroom teammates. At every site, there was lots of joy, laughter, and relationship-building. I know that this eventful day helped students make memories that will last a lifetime!

As scholars begin to settle into their 2025-26 academic journey, academic expectations are going to ramp up with curriculum underway and beginning of year assessments. Parents, please ensure that students are completing homework and practicing what they are learning at home. It is essential that we continue to prioritize partnership and support of our scholars for a GREAT school year!



With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Ashli Miller".

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ageless EyeCare Visit – September 3rd & 4th!

Ageless EyeCare will be visiting GLA on **Wednesday, September 3rd, and Thursday, September 4th** to provide vision services for our scholars.

Please note that **only students with completed consent forms will be eligible to be seen.**

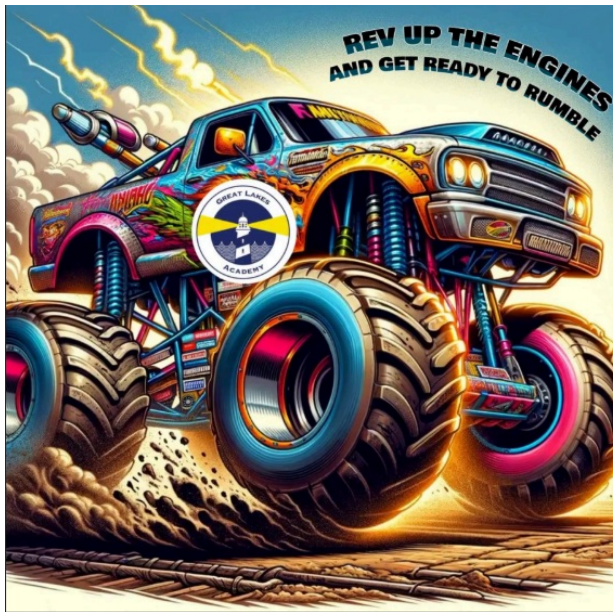
If you have not yet signed up your scholar and would like them to participate, you may visit the GLA front office to complete a consent form.

For questions or additional information, please contact: **Sheree Thunherst** at sthunherst@glachicago.org

Race to 10 is On!

We're excited to launch our Race to 10 Attendance Challenge. The first homeroom to

achieve 100% attendance 10 times will win a free field trip. Parents will also have the chance to win raffled gas or Uber gift cards as an added bonus. Let's work together to make every day count! Attendance matters!



We are excited to kick off

Race to 10

the homeroom that achieves
100% attendance 10 times wins
a FREE field trip & 2 raffled
parent gas/Uber gift cards.

OpenSeat- Middle School

This year, our school is once again partnering with OpenSeat to increase access to mental health and well-being support for our students. OpenSeat offers students one-on-one, short-term virtual wellness coaching to address a range of issues they may struggle with, including anxiety, academic stress, motivation, sadness, or loss.

Through OpenSeat, your student will have access to:

- secure, virtual, and 1:1 access to OpenSeat's trained and supervised coaches via video or chat
- diverse wellness professionals with years of professional experience supporting students
- Short-term, flexible coaching is available during the school day. (never during core classes)

All middle school families will receive an email this week explaining more about OpenSeat. In the email, there will be an Opt-Out Form for guardians who do not want their student to access OpenSeat virtual wellness coaching. Please sign and date this form, and return it to the front office by September 5, 2025. Feel free to contact Ms. Melissa with any questions or concerns at mstangl@glachicago.org.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

2025-26 5th - 8th Grade Parents

All 6th–8th grade scholars must bring their Yondr pouch on the first day of school. This is **required for entry** into the building. All small electronics (phones, watches, earbuds) must be placed in the pouch daily.

5th grade and new middle school scholars will receive their pouches on the first day of school. Any scholar who does not bring a pouch will be issued one, and a **\$25 fee** will be added to their account.

Thank you for helping us maintain a focused, phone-free learning environment.

GLA Spirit Wear is Here!

We're excited to announce the launch of our very first GLA Spirit Wear Website! Show off your GLA pride with our unique collection of spirit wear.

⚠ Please note: This is not for purchasing uniforms.

NOTE: This is spirit wear only and if worn during the school day will be considered out of uniform for scholars.

Sale Dates: Now through September 16, 2025

Special Offer: Use code SCHOOL25 at checkout for 25% off all merchandise

Bonus: Enjoy FREE shipping on orders of \$75 or more – delivered right to your door!

[Click here to shop now!](#)

Or scan the QR code on the flyer to start shopping.

We're thrilled to finally offer spirit wear to our GLA families – don't miss out on this exciting opportunity!

Please reach out to Sheree Thunherst, sthunherst@glachicago.org, with any questions.



GLA Uniform T-Shirts – Pre-Order Now!

We're excited to offer GLA uniform t-shirts for pre-order! In addition to the GLA polos available in the front office, you can now pre-order:

- Short Sleeve Uniform T-Shirts – \$13
- Long Sleeve Uniform T-Shirts – \$16

Why Pre-Order?

Pre-ordering guarantees your scholar will receive their uniform t-shirts from our first shipment.

How to Order:

Please refer to the order form for available t-shirt options and sizing.

Don't miss out—pre-order now to make sure your scholar is fully prepared for the school year!

[Uniform Pre-order](#)

Please reach out to Sheree Thunherst, sthunherst@glachicago.org, with any questions.

GLA Polos Now Available!

GLA polos are now available for purchase at the GLA front office for just \$16 each. Available colors include light blue, navy, and yellow.

Fall Sports!



GREAT LAKES ACADEMY ATHLETICS

FALL SPORTS SIGN UP!



SIGN-UPS CLOSE 9/1

Fall sports sign-ups are open, click [HERE](#) to join the action!

The sports offered this fall include:

- Co-ed cheer
- Girls volleyball
- Boys football

The sign-up deadline is Monday, September 1st.

Please reach out to Coach P (tperez@glachicago.org) with any questions or concerns.

WIDA Screeners

Ms. Harr and Ms. Gonzalez will be administering the 2025-2026 WIDA Screener during the week of August 25–29. This assessment helps identify Multilingual learners who are eligible for services in the MLL program. Students who have been identified as needing to be screened will be pulled from class briefly to complete the

screening. Thank you for your support as we ensure all students get the services they need to succeed!

2025-26 School Calendar

The 2025-26 school calendar has been posted to GLA's website. Please [view it here](#).

2025-26 School Supply List

Here is the [school supply list](#). Please do not label any supplies with your students name, unless otherwise noted.

GLA Annual Fee: 2025-26

We will be sending out invoices for the 2025-65 annual fee soon. The annual fee is \$90. For clarity, we wanted to define what this fee covers for each scholar during the school year:

Lower School (K-4)	Middle School (5-8)
<p>Access to Technology All students will have access to Chromebooks to support personalized learning, provide quick feedback, and track student progress over time with data-driven insights.</p> <p>Student Platform and Software Licenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GoGuardian: Student safety and security platform.• i-Ready: Math and reading platform that targets individual student needs.• Wayfinder: Social Emotional Learning Curriculum.• ANET: Assessment platform used to monitor student progress and ensure students are on-track.• ARC: ARC Core helps meet the literacy needs of all students in any learning environment.	<p>Access to Technology All students will have access to Chromebooks to support personalized learning, provide quick feedback, and track student progress over time with data-driven insights.</p> <p>Student Platform and Software Licenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GoGuardian: Student safety and security platform.• i-Ready: Math and reading platform that targets individual student needs.• Wayfinder: Social Emotional Learning Curriculum.• ANET: Assessment platform used to monitor student progress and ensure students are on-track. <p>Middle School Planner All 5th-8th grade students will be given an agenda planner to promote organization and responsibility.</p>

This year, we will be offering sibling discounts and early payment incentives! Please see the table below for sibling/household discounts. Natural, step-siblings, and members of the same household are eligible.

Scholars Enrolled	Discount	Fee Price Per Scholar	Due by August 30
ONE	0%	\$90	\$90
TWO	10%	\$81	\$162
THREE	20%	\$72	\$216
FOUR	30%	\$63	\$252

FIVE	40%	\$54	\$270
SIX	50%	\$45	\$270

In addition to sibling/household discounts, we are happy to offer early payment incentives, including a free GLA polo if payment is made in full and submitted by August 29th! No payment plans are accepted for this incentive.

Please pay with the PayPal invoice provided at the front office or by phone as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please call our front office at 773-530-3040.

School Year Office Hours

Monday-Thursday, 7:30-4:30 pm

Friday, 7:30-2:00 pm

GLA Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper Menus

Click [here](#) to access (these are also linked on our website's [Parent and Student Resource Page](#))

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES **Aug 25 - Sept 19, 2025**

25	26	27	28	29
iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	iReady Diagnostics and SOY IRLA ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)
1 Suicide Awareness Month → Labor Day- Building Closed	2 ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	3 ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	4 ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)	5 ARC IRLA Assessments (new students)
8	9	10	11	12 Family Curriculum Night, 2:30-4:30 pm
15 Hispanic Heritage Month → Virtual 8th Grade GoCPS Family Night, 5:30 pm	16	17 Parent Advocacy Committee (PAC) Meeting, 5:00-6:30 pm	18	19



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